

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION



Quarterly Official Organ of The Theosophical Society in Europe—Federation of National Societies

CHAIRMAN AND EDITOR—Mrs. Claire Wyss, Bruderholz str. 88, 4000 Basle, Switzerland.
ASSISTANT EDITOR—Mrs. Greta Eedle, 35 Stile Hall Gardens, London, W.4, England.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT—
c/o 50 Gloucester Place, London, W.1, England.

Extracts from the President's Address to the Pays Latins Summer School

Summer Schools are a means of bringing together members and workers in different countries who would not otherwise meet. We come to understand one another by exchanging our thoughts and learning about what others are doing. We meet in order to give attention to those matters which are most worth understanding, and insofar as we do so we become vitalized and strengthened.

What we call Theosophy must never become stale; if it does then it is not Theosophy. It will never become stale if it is a matter of living and not of merely talking. Our thoughts may be the same, but the manner of thinking can always be fresh and it can be so if it is an expression of what one feels and realizes.

Our aim is to understand more deeply that which can change our lives completely. If we go on in the same old way and merely learn a number of new things in order to store them in our minds, that will make no difference to our lives. The whole manner in which the mind and heart function has to be changed. They have to be brought into a certain focus.

Wisdom lies always in action, but when the word action is used it does not mean only the overt, visible acts; thinking is also action; being, feeling is also action. Man's being exists at several different levels, and the way he acts at every level has to be just right. So wisdom lies in acting according to the truth of things, not according to fancies and illusions. The action of the whole being has to be right, and every response to every event and situation, person and thing has to be right.

We have to realize that we think in the way in which the mind has been moulded from the very beginning of our life. It is also our vocation which moulds us to some extent. A person may be a scientist or an artist, or a commercial man, but he will think according to the way he has been trained in his vocation. In other words, every one of us thinks on all matters in certain set moulds. Which mould is the correct one, which is better than the others? People fight over the way they think, and that is partly the cause of the various quarrels. When one thinks in the way the mind has become set, he cannot judge the truth. It is only a mind and a heart which is not conditioned that is capable of knowing the truth.

What we call the soul has no religion and no nationality. It has a nature which is unconditioned. It is in such a condition that one can see all things exactly as they are, not as we would like them to be, that is, look at all things without any mental distortion, not thinking according to one's wishes or according to one's fears.

The nature of consciousness in its original condition is the same as that of spirit, and this consciousness of ours can be a mirror of truth. A mirror reflects correctly all the things before it and, if it is a good mirror, there will be no distortion, no colouring. So in the same way our consciousness reflects the world, the external world and its facts. Various images are formed in that consciousness and the mind identifies itself with those images. The mirror does not identify itself with the reflections in the mirror, it has no likes and dislikes, but our mind has all kinds of likes and dislikes towards the images which are present in it. It is the identification with these images, which are formed in the consciousness, which creates the notion of a separate self; and it is

only when there is not that self that one can really give one's heart completely to anything.

We talk of love and affection, but there is always a certain reservation in our love or affection. In other words, we cannot give ourselves completely. We have to reserve some portion for ourselves and give just a little. But there is this condition of mind and heart in which it can give itself completely, totally, and in that condition it acts according to a certain truth that is within itself. There is truth within oneself as well as truth in the world outside. There is the truth of one's own being, the harmony it contains, which harmony is also beauty and virtue. When we see an outer form which presents a certain harmony, then we experience it as beauty. Fundamentally the essence of beauty lies in harmony, but there can be harmony also within oneself, in the functioning of one's inner being, and that harmony is experienced as happiness or beauty. We might call it the beauty of the soul.

Now this approach to Theosophy does not exclude ordinary knowledge. The word Theosophy means Divine Wisdom, but if it is Divine Wisdom it is not the ordinary kind of knowledge. It is a different kind of knowledge, and that kind of knowledge cannot be attained by the mind unless it is prepared for it. Not only the mind, but the whole being has to be prepared for the reception of truth, the truth which is important. In this approach to Theosophy the whole relationship is between the consciousness which comprehends and the truth which it comprehends.

We can accept certain things as likely, as plausible. Even in science there is such a thing as a hypothesis. What is called the Relativity Theory of Einstein does not correspond to our actual experience of things. Yet why is that theory accepted? Because it explains certain phenomena. So in the same way we may accept certain facts which are called occult if we feel and think that they come from a knowledgeable source.

Why do we call something Divine Wisdom? Because it is a truth which, when it is perceived, attracts the whole being of man and this is really the essence of what is called religion. It is that truth, which is also beauty, which attracts man in that manner. One surrenders one's heart when there is nothing that one wants for oneself. That is really the essence of religion, and Theosophy has that character in addition to being a science and a philosophy.

There is a divinity enshrined in all things, even though we may not perceive it. It is somewhere deep down in the person or the thing. So we have to go beyond the appearance and find that which is divine. The discovery of that truth, which is hidden in the heart of things, is Theosophy in its essence.

A GOOD IDEA

Some of our readers are in the habit of giving subscriptions to *Theosophy in Action* as Christmas or New Year presents. The editor would be both delighted and grateful if more would acquire this excellent habit!

What does each Individual need in order to be able to live as a Human Being?

Summary of a Symposium at Uddevalla

In order to deal with this subject, we must know what a human being is.

At first sight, as he is consciously, he is a complex being—a bundle of attributes, living at different levels, in different fields. In each of those fields he has certain basic needs which must be fulfilled in order for him to be able to live as a human being. His physical nature needs air, drink, food and sleep in the first place, in the second place exercise and care of various kinds—all these things in moderation. As a being possessed of feelings, he needs on the one hand love, the feeling of being wanted, and the ability to love, and on the other hand, a certain amount of challenge which will awaken his possibilities and make him assert himself. As a thinking being, he needs a certain amount of mental effort. Again, he needs all this in moderation—a certain amount within certain limits.

Now, exactly where those limits will lie differs in the case of each individual. So we cannot lay down precise canons of what everyone needs in order to live as a human being. Within the basic requirements, each individual must find out for himself what he needs and how much, even at the physical level.

But even if an individual finds out exactly what his requirements are and fulfils them in the sense indicated above and is content with that for the moment, sooner or later dissatisfaction will arise, because man is more than the bundle of qualities that go to make up his mental, emotional and physical nature.

He is, above all, a spiritual being. The spiritual domain does not obey laws that are cut and dried and understandable to our intellect, because it is beyond the intellect. In this sense, the spiritual aspect of man does not have any needs. It simply is. Why is man therefore dissatisfied?

On the one hand, he is, above all, deep in himself, a spiritual being. On the other hand, he does not know himself consciously as a spiritual being. So he is constantly frustrated, as a conscious being, because he does not know what he is and he tends to take the conscious part of himself, physical, emotional and mental, to be his whole self, his real self.

So we could say that what man needs, from this point of view, is a realisation of himself as a spiritual being. This will only be possible when his spiritual nature makes itself felt in him, when it has an outlet. As we have said, the spiritual side of man simply is, it is there—it is everywhere—but it does not have an opportunity to make itself felt. Why?

The reason is obvious. We do not give it an opportunity.

For millions of years, probably, man in general has been occupied with seeking to satisfy the needs of his conscious nature run riot. He has been, and still is, occupied by eating, drinking and making merry, by enjoying emotions fierce and tender, feasts of booklearning and elaborate theories, by amassing wealth and power. It is perfectly right that he should do so. But, with time, dissatisfaction with these various pleasures arises in him and he seeks either to extinguish them in asceticism or, more wisely, to enjoy them in the right dose in an Epicurean manner.

But the chief occupation of man—and this is more serious—has been his complete inner and emotional and mental

absorption in the task of satisfying needs, and, above all, satisfying his need to feel important, to feel that he is not a mere bundle of attributes, but a very important personality in his own right, more important than others—and always right! To this end is directed the constant chattering of his mind—firstly, to activating his mind and feelings so that they feel they form a definite personality, and secondly to covering up his discomfort at the feeling that something is lacking to the unity of his being.

It is extremely difficult to stop this chattering of the mind, this habit engrained in humanity for many ages. But if we can do so for a moment, we may catch a glimpse of our spiritual nature. This will probably not be possible until the moment is ripe, after much dissatisfaction, disappointment, suffering and apparently fruitless effort. But if it is possible, it can give us a new angle on life.

How is it possible to still the mind, to make a break in the chain of inner sensations so that the spiritual nature can be glimpsed? Perhaps there are as many means of doing so as there are people. It may come about, paradoxically, due to a crisis in which one of our basic so-called needs is left unsatisfied—conditions of want, above all emotional or mental shocks, disappointments or frustrations. Betrayal, doubt as to our own ability, loneliness may burst the bubble of the all-important personality we thought we were. It may come about by concentration on any task in which we can lose ourselves. It may come about in deep happiness shared, it may come about in religious devotion, in philanthropic work.

What happens in all these cases? We lose the footing we have so painfully established for ourselves. We lose ourselves, we forget ourselves.

The secret of the spiritual self of man is unity. He is not just a spiritual being in his own right. As a spiritual being, he is part of all others, he is part of a great unity that embraces the whole world. It is this unity he seeks in vain in trying to satisfy so-called needs at the level where he is a conscious bundle of attributes. When someone has had a glimpse of his spiritual nature and can act on it, he often ceases to be subject to ordinary needs. Hence the childlike innocence of the saint in worldly matters, hence the faith that moves mountains.

Here lies the final and most basic need of man—to realise his inner spiritual nature as one with all.

But man is a creature in constant process of adaptation and development, living in a world that presents him with problems. What each man needs at any given moment will never be quite the same, and only he himself can judge what it is. If we follow the will of the wisps in our search to satisfy various needs, the experience we gather will not be lost and, if we sometimes transgress the law of humanness, the consequences will at some time or another return to us. Then we may feel frustrated because our needs are not being satisfied, but such frustration comes in response to an inner need—inner also in us—for justice, and it may be fruitful and lead us nearer to the satisfaction of man's basic need—when he is ready—the emergence of his spiritual nature.

MARY ANDERSON



THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
IN EUROPE
FEDERATION OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES
Theosophy in Action

KEEPING UP TO DATE

SOME MEMBERS ASK, 'ARE WE UP TO DATE enough with our Theosophy?' Others will say, 'What a foolish question. Theosophy is the Ancient and Ageless Wisdom; how can one talk of bringing it up to date?' True, the fundamental principles, propositions, ideas and ideals of Theosophy constitute what H.P. Blavatsky called the 'eternal verities.' She gathered them from instruction given by the Mahatmas who taught her; they are also to be found scattered throughout numerous old books and manuscripts. But the way these verities are presented, explained and interpreted must vary with different ages and circumstances. H.P.B.'s method was to back up a teaching by quoting from writers of the time. We can well follow her example. Today, scientific, philosophic and mystical thought is far different from what it was 100 years ago. The theories and hypotheses put forward by modern thinkers in these fields often closely approach the theosophical standpoint. This is of prime importance and full advantage should be taken of it in propounding or expounding the doctrines of the esoteric philosophy.

There is another way also by which we can keep up to date. At the World Congress at Salzburg in 1966 some 'young theosophists' averred that it was only in their groups that current topics of special interest to them could be discussed. This was challenged, because there certainly are theosophical gatherings of persons of all ages who will talk freely about any matter affecting life in the world today in order to see what light Theosophy can shed on our many problems. Indeed, if Theosophy is to be anything more than a set of pleasant theories, its doctrines must be applied to the circumstances and activities of life and to the relationships both of individuals and groups. It has been argued that Theosophists should confine themselves to purely spiritual matters—in a vacuum, as it were—and that the behaviour of men and women in the world is their personal concern and not ours. That is very near to an ivory tower concept; it is far from the attitude of H.P.B. and subsequent leaders of the Theosophical Movement. Surely all aspects of humanity must be our affair: international relations, racial difficulties, economic, industrial and social problems, the challenge of youth, the use and misuse of drugs, and all moral and spiritual issues very much concern us. All men and women are one mankind and what each does affects all. Theosophy may well give guidance towards a sane, balanced and realistic attitude to sex, marriage and divorce, euthanasia, abortion, drugs and other aspects of our age.

Moreover, among young people particularly there is both an idealism and a deep desire to find what truth they can. They therefore, as always, talk about every conceivable subject from the universal to the most personal. Their elders, if they are to be able to help at all, must also take an intelligent interest in everything, free from preconception or bias, and in utter honesty. There is usually some facet of the Eternal Wisdom to suggest a helpful line when questions are put asking what acceptable basis there is for any code of behaviour or any moral standard. Why should I do this or not do that? Usually the questioner is genuinely seeking a sound, convincing and rational reason for a moral code that he feels he needs, rather than wishing to be an ethical anarchist.

Perhaps the surest way for us to gain an interested and useful attitude to our fellows, young and old, is to discover the deep meaning of loving one's neighbour as oneself: not just to love him as well as one loves oneself, not even as if he were oneself, but *as oneself*, meaning that he is indeed oneself—which the third fundamental proposition of *The Secret Doctrine* avers.

From the Chairman

SOME THOUGHTS ON INTUITION

Intuition is not swift thought, in fact the mind cannot comprehend it at all. All thinking about the intuition is only a mental picture, however beautiful, which arises out of our fund of experience. Intuition cannot be understood in the sphere of continuity. It can only be apprehended if one plunges from thought into something that appears to be absolute nothingness. It is this leap that represents the void, for no burden of the mind can reach that nothingness, not even the highest ideal. We all seek truth, beauty, God. This search has crystallised itself into our thought; we find words for it; we seek to reach the goal with these thoughts and these words; we seek to build on previous experience, to go on constructing in order to reach some target, but wherever we look, such efforts of thought and words to find Reality through the mind have been unsuccessful. Thought cannot attain Reality.

When the mind is free of its content, a vision of Reality may be granted to us. Therefore we can only recognize the divine in man and things when the mind is free of its content. This liberation can only be experienced from moment to moment, not continuously.

The mind can touch the outermost edge of apparent nothingness when it is free of all the unnecessary burden of the unimportant. This is the process known as discrimination. The ancient wisdom proclaims that the knowledge of the not-Self in one's own nature is the path to the knowledge of the Self. By knowledge of the not-Self in us, we become free of the burden of the unimportant. When that which we have recognized as the not-Self is set aside, we reach a point which is the outermost edge of apparent nothingness. If one looks at life in this condition, true desirelessness unfolds in one's own consciousness.

If we have continuously a clear vision of Reality, that is to say from moment to moment, we have discovered the point from which we can never err, and where we act from the true centre of our being. Right relationship or universal brotherhood is, in fact, this action from the centre, the point of consciousness from which we have an unblurred vision of Reality.

CLAIRE WYSS

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

If the Society is to be a power for good in this and other lands, it can only bring about this result by the active cooperation of every one of its members, and we would earnestly appeal to each of them to consider carefully what possibilities of work are within his power and then to *earnestly set about carrying them into effect*. Right thought is a good thing, but thought alone does not count for much unless it is translated into action. There is not a single member in the Society who is not able to do something to aid the cause of truth and universal brotherhood; it only depends on his own will, to make something an accomplished fact.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

Full details of this were given in the last issue and so far about 35 members have announced their intention to take part. Entries should be submitted by the end of December 1970 and it is hoped that more members will apply to take part. Applications should be addressed to the Administrator of the Meyer Fund: Mr. G. Tripet, 29, Avenue Dumas, 1200 Geneva, Switzerland.

FROM A SUBSCRIBER IN NICARAGUA

Mr. Alejandro Osorio D. of Managua writes:

I congratulate the editors of this periodical, and admire the splendid articles published. I hope to translate some of them in order to read them at our lodge meetings.

REINCARNATION

MONTAGUE A. MACHELL

Of all the theosophical teachings, I question if any has a more fundamentally determining influence on the life of an earth-bound mortal than the doctrine of Reincarnation. This teaching, of repeated embodiments of a spiritual Self on earth, each followed by a period of repose in Devachan, does more than merely take the meaningless haste out of living. It encourages the logical mind to glimpse a larger overall significance to the life-plan.

If that which death puts an end to is but a fragile and superficial disguise, in the form of a physical body and temporal personality, of an enduring spiritual Reality, the laws of logic suggest that the entity that does *not* die, but occupies one body after another, must either be worth all this trouble for its own sake, or it must have direct obligations to the bodies it occupies and discards. In any case, this reincarnating entity is obviously the one to which primary attention should be given, with a view to discovering its significance and *raison d'être*.

When to the doctrine of Reincarnation Theosophy adds the declaration that man, in essence, is a spiritual being, enjoying fundamental identity with the spiritual universe he inhabits, one has only to add 2 plus 2 to reach the conclusion that the Self death is powerless to destroy is the Self through whose ministration Reincarnation achieves a destined goal—a realized Karmic Pattern, theosophically speaking. He who is firmly convinced of this truth cannot escape seeing in this reincarnating Self the deathlessly beautiful denizen of All Life.

To the here-today-gone-tomorrow personality, "All Life" (the Spiritual Self), invokes dreams of immeasurable significance, suggesting "worlds without end," which are beckoning the pilgrim onward from the twilight of one earthly embodiment to the dawn of the post-Devachan rebirth. This regal vista, rendered splendid by its own spiritual reality, pours new meaning into the earthly scene, revealing it as the catalyst that inaugurates a transformation of matter into spirit. Man senses the Spirit challenging him to win Lordship of Life, through the exercise of his own re-discovered divinity.

To remind oneself that into these age-long cycles of unfoldment have been poured, incarnation after incarnation, the chastening joys, sorrows, and spiritual enlightenment of numberless dynasties, empires, civilizations, cannot but lend added depth to that word "life." To further take account of the cycles of unfoldment yet to come, is to come face to face with the destiny of this Spiritual Titan—MAN! Is he not, verily, a Pilgrim whose progress takes in all Time and all Space? Thus does Reincarnation, the Illuminator of Destiny, raise the curtain on LIFE!

Confronted with such a perspective, is there any room for parochialism, rivalries or schisms? To be *alive*, and to clearly comprehend what that means, evokes the awesome vista of all our forgotten but fateful Yesterdays. Is their reminder of Wholeness with all men in a conscious spiritual pilgrimage, can we escape discovering ourselves as Trustees of those eternal Truths that lend a measureless significance and portent to TODAY? Surely, to GROW in a design so celestially opulent, is an invitation to discover Heaven on Earth!

As a man slowly achieves a recognition of his immortality, the familiar barriers of life and death reveal themselves as recurring portals of initiation—an initiation demanded by our own sincere aspiration. No one of them is an absolute "beginning," no one an absolute "end." Through all of them man must keep his eye on the Absolute Pattern—the soul's progress through Illusion to Enlightenment. Because of Reincarnation, because of the assurance of his spiritual origin and destiny, because of this eternal Programme of Growth, through the twilight of earth-life, he glimpses the dawn of a more glorious tomorrow. As spiritual perception matures, Life Everlasting becomes for him the abiding glory of this immeasurable panorama of earthly existence.

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN SUMMER-SCHOOL AT UDDEVALLA 1969

High up among the rocks of the county of Bohuslan, in Sweden, on the outskirts of Uddevalla, is Bohusgarden, where the Scandinavian sections held their summer-school.

There was something symbolic in this choice of place, for at this lofty altitude we were able to rise above everyday matters and live "time-less" in the lofty regions of deep thought and pure feeling.

The school had an international touch as the European Federation held its Council Meeting and many theosophical workers had gathered there. Twelve nations were represented and our guests of honour were the President, Mr. N. Sri Ram, and Mrs. Radha Burnier, general secretary of the Indian section. Other prominent guests were Mrs. Claire Wyss, chairman of the European Federation, Mr. and Mrs. V. Wallace Slater, Mr. Geoffrey Farthing, from England, Miss Jean Carstairs from Scotland and Madame Hermine Sabetay from France.

The key-note of the summer-school was "Our View of Man In The World Of Today" and lectures, symposia, and discussions centred on this idea.

Every day started with meditation in the conference hall. Many members were excellent musicians and generously helped to create a beautiful atmosphere.

On the 13th the main Council meeting of the European Federation took place. Reports were given from the chairman of the Federation, Mrs. Claire Wyss, Switzerland, and from the general secretaries from different sections, and everybody was invited to attend. All reports were full of optimism and we had the impression that work is carried on with enthusiasm.

Mr. V. Wallace Slater gave an appreciated lecture on "The Individual in a World of Conflict." Mr. N. Sri Ram talked about "The Nature of Man" to an enthralled audience.

Mr. Geoffrey Farthing took up some practical points and also defined what we mean by objective and subjective theosophy. On the whole there was much talk based on different ideas about how to present theosophy in the world to-day.

Dr. Bo Johnson, Göteborg, talked about "The religious need—an unrecognized factor in medical and mental care" and illustrated his theories with cases from his practice as a psychiatrist, which revealed the need for a new outlook of man as a spiritual being.

Mr. Arne Hansen from Oslo has become a popular and beloved co-worker during our summer-schools and this time he gave a most illuminating talk, "Living freedom."

Six different discussion-groups met three times in the afternoon on: Yoga and meditation; Self Realization; How we practise our view of man; The individual and society; Theosophical basic ideas; Communication and Understanding.

Mrs. Radha Burnier gave two lectures, one on "The First two noble Truths" and another on the Indian movement 'New Life for India,' founded as a help to meet corruption and disrespect of law and order which is a great hindrance for India on her way to better social conditions.

There was a choice of excursions either by boat on the fjord to the archipelago or by bus to the world-famous prehistoric rock-carvings at Tanum. There were also two films showing different parts of Sweden to our foreign guests.

Finally, Mr. Reinhold von Arndt of Germany gave a splendid piano concert.

Mr. Jan Barmark, Göteborg, gave us some examples of different conceptions of man today. He later gave an interesting report of the summer school to a big Swedish daily paper, presenting the theosophy of today to the public.

The 'grand old man' of the Swedish section, Dr. Bernhard Hegardt, gave a lecture on "Creative evolution," with an interesting analysis of the French philosopher Bergson's idea of time.

In a short lecture called "The Impact of Science and Technology on the Individual and on Society," Joris Brandt, Holland, presented a clear view, and the following symposium dealt with changes needed in present day society.

Madame Sabetay's lecture gave us a vision of the next step in evolution, to arouse intuition leading to unity, and she

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THE MOON LANDING: OF WHAT SIGNIFICANCE?

By N. SRI RAM

The question has been asked by some: Has the landing of two men from the earth on the surface of the moon, and their safe return, designed as a precursor to further such voyages, any deep significance for the progress of humanity on the earth? Millions of people in many countries saw this feat being performed on television, with amazement and admiration of the planning, the technological capacities and daring displayed in the carrying out of a mission which earlier in this century would have been scouted as an unthinkable dream. The event will certainly stand out as a landmark in human history, a triumphant demonstration of what twentieth-century science and technology can achieve. If only the same spirit of persistence, the energy, skill, imagination and other qualities that made the feat possible, could be applied to the solution of the human problems on this planet, the long hoped-for new era of peace and plenty and opportunities for all its peoples would become an achieved reality. But however much one may be impressed by the way the moon project has been carried out, the fact remains that neither this feat nor any similar one that may be attempted can make men either better or happier for it. However far man may manage to go in space, using the instrumentation, rockets, fuel, space suits and what-not, that he has devised, he will be carrying himself as he is, with all his problems at several different levels. The happiness which every human being seeks and which can come only from within his own being, has to be attained by quite other means. The further progress of humanity will not lie, one may venture to say, in more of the science and technology that man has developed so far, but may lie in a different kind of development, giving rise to a new culture, more peaceful, more harmonized, with none of the major contradictions and problems that afflict us at present. All the science and technology we have, and more, will then form an infra-structure for the kind of life that such a culture may mean, the picture which it presents. Every phase of human development has its own special genius and qualities to manifest. We are obviously in the phase of an active, analytical and inventive mind, largely divorced from other areas of our being where there is the possibility of a more perceptive intelligence and the appreciation of values to which we are blind at present.

If there is to be a real new era, it must be one in which the fruits of the present period will have been digested and assimilated, but in addition, something strikingly different, distinctive, and new will have emerged in the human consciousness, capable of making life different at every level for humanity as a whole. Nature does not in the evolutionary process endlessly continue the same old patterns and forms. From time to time there is a break and a new start, but what was of value in the old is either incorporated into the new or used as a basis for it.

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pointed to some signs in the present world of this new era for humanity. The President's lecture on the same day also dealt with the future. "The way of Man's further Progress."

On the last day, Mrs. Claire Wyss gave a short talk on "Man's inner Nature and the World today" and the Swedish general secretary, Mr. Curt Berg, gave his answer to the question "Which is the way to go?" It is we ourselves who create our destiny, we should make use of conditions and not let them use us. The summer-school was closed by the President, who said he had enjoyed very much the beautiful Swedish summer and nature, the fine music and all the happy members. He wanted us to really understand that "to live close to nature" means: to live from the deeper nature where we are all one.

We all left Uddevalla feeling more alive, more active within. We had experienced how life can be lived when the real man is allowed to enter the stage.

HARRY FORSBERG/BARBRO MELANDER

KARMA AND WORLD NUTRITION

By GRETA EEDLE

When the vicar of our parish church announced the hymn, he added: "Omitting the third verse." So to a new and rather jolly tune we began to sing:

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

But if we did not sing the third verse, we certainly read it. It runs:

The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high and lowly,
And ordered their estate.

Now obviously we could not sing this 19th century version of the law of karma, for it is simply no longer acceptable to anybody either in the western world or the communist countries. In the last hundred years we have come to believe that poverty is not a necessary condition to be accepted, but a deplorable state to be remedied with all possible speed. The means of doing so are available if people will bestir themselves to use them, and many are indeed doing so.

Yet the all-important difficulty of world food production still needs to be overcome. Sufficient food can be grown to feed at least four times the present population of the world, as has been pointed out in a number of publications, especially those issued by the U.N. Food & Agricultural Organisation. What is now needed is the faith among the populations of the countries where there is malnutrition that poverty can be abolished.

It is a great opportunity for members of the Theosophical Society to create the necessary faith, and with it to restore to the world the true meaning of the concept of karma and to rid the world of its accumulated superstition.

Karma is action, the setting of new trends in motion which will alter the face of the world and in particular the faces of the starving and disease-ridden victims of a belief that is no longer tenable. In *The Secret Doctrine* Madame Blavatsky wrote: "Nor would the ways of karma be inscrutable were men to work in union and harmony . . . With right knowledge . . . two-thirds of the world's evil would vanish into thin air."

It is safe to assume that Madame Blavatsky knew the world better than to suggest that the entire population of the globe would have to undergo a complete change of attitude before our conditions could improve, and we could rid ourselves of two-thirds of the world's evil. The idea can be applied to many levels of experience, but one interpretation can be that we can change our collective outlook to recognize that physical poverty is unnecessary anywhere and no part of world karma.

We know that when poverty is eliminated there is a great release of formerly unsuspected talent which leads to further energetic activity in a variety of fields. The mind can only function fully through a sufficiently nourished brain, and the higher emotions through a healthy physical body without nagging worries.

Although the figures of malnutrition estimated twenty years ago are now fortunately inaccurate owing to increased production, large so-called 'pockets' of malnutrition and the diseases resulting from this condition are still widespread. Even if these do not account for more than 10% of the world's population, they do still affect 300,000,000 human beings.

The first, need, therefore, is the creation of a strong thought form that will impress upon the leaders of all nations that the first necessity for their peoples is sufficient food, and that all other luxuries, whether they are for national or personal prestige, come later.

The second need is to assist undernourished people into accepting the belief that they alone can remedy their condition, and to persuade the intelligent youth of the country to put first things first, to learn up-to-date methods of agriculture, to go into the country and instruct the people, settle there and remain with them.

The karma of sufficiency and of wealth flows much more understanding. Wealth needs to those who set up the conditions that attract it. Karma does not only mean action, it must be seen to mean it, and shown to mean it wherever our members are to be found.

The Revolt of Youth

By DR. NORBERT LAUPPERT, GRAZ.

Our present-day civilisation has a dis-united look. Superficially it is characterised by a refusal to think about the future. The great majority dance round the golden calf of the standard of living, the raising of which is made the compelling goal of life. But anxiety about the future is only suppressed. In the midst of prosperity which a few decades ago would have been unimaginable, neuroses of all kinds are constantly on the increase. Man has never had it so good, but he is not really happy.

One of the signs, which we should heed, is the growing unrest of youth. Rebellion has always been the prerogative of youth, but the world-wide unrest which expresses itself in mass protests, such as almost led to chaos and to a collapse of the regime in France last year, goes far beyond the usual limits.

The most notable common feature of most of these protests is that the hard-won democratic freedoms, the prosperity built up with hard thinking and hard work, are rejected as of little value, as 'Establishment,' as a comfortable static order. Existing political groups are met with indifference or hostility, and youth relies only on its own disorganized action.

Youth regards our present-day 'Establishment' as too poor in ideals. Youth readily submits to discipline if an ideal requires it, whether the ideal is true or false. Youth demands objectives for which it is worth while, not only to live, but if necessary also to sacrifice and to die. The mere standard of living is not an objective worth dying for.

But the uneasiness of youth, its protest and its revolt, are also directed against something else, which is perhaps not so clearly perceived; as in the East, though in a different way, the economic and social system in the West is driving in a direction which is felt as threatening and inhuman.

The political, economic and social structure of our civilisation is moving further and further away from the individual human being. In former times political and religious leaders used to fight, often wrongly and fanatically, but, so to speak, with the injection of their heart's blood. Today one often has the feeling that it is only a question of the programming of various computer systems. Our social organism has become such a complicated mechanism that it can no longer be mastered except by experts and computers. The politician too can survey it only imperfectly. In the face of this system the individual is powerless.

We, the older generation, have got used to it—youth has not. Why?

Here theosophy is able not only to give an explanation, but also indications at least in which direction a solution can be sought.

According to theosophy, man, in his inner permanent core, is a spiritual being, a spark of the great spiritual flame which is immanent in the cosmos and which the religions call God.

According to cosmic law, this spark of spirit, the monad, in the course of cyclic incarnations on earth develops an individuality. It is born in a physical body, develops feeling and thought, its psyche, and builds its personality from life to life with growing success. After death it withdraws into its psychic aspect, works up the harvest of its life and allows earthly desires and thoughts to die away. Finally this life's harvest is absorbed into the gradually forming spiritual individuality. There the man finds himself so to speak in contemplation of the divine.

From this contemplation, from this unity with the universal, he comes to re-birth. It takes about the first decade and a half, until the new body is developed, the brain a fully-trained instrument, and the psyche so far unfolded, that he, the spirit, can act through the new personality.

Now he looks at the world with open eyes and keen understanding. The conventions built up by preceding generations do not bind him, he sees through their conventional lies and phrases and despises them.

According to temperament, to the strength of the forces of the personality

in relation to the spiritual individuality, the effects of this contempt may vary.

In many the rebellion remains negative, a mere tearing down of pretences; don't be so hypocritical, acknowledge publicly the pleasures to which you are secretly addicted, but round which you hang the cloak of convention, away with all social rules and limitations!

Where the spiritual imperative is stronger, it does not remain negative. Behind the rejection of the structure of pretence, of the merely materially-based 'Establishment,' lies the oppression, conscious or unconscious, of the burning question: just what is the truth, the real, that for which it is worth living and dying?

This quest, with many young people, is still disorganized, but that is not the fault of youth alone. Youth looks for leaders, but the older generation has not been able to supply them. The churches have woken up too late, or not at all, to the fact that the problems of life cannot be solved with the old dogmas in the age of nuclear physics and space travel. The striving to know and experience the beyond—clear also in present-day abstract art—has led into devious and wrong paths—one thinks of the hippies and LSD. But when the Beatles went to India, a sudden interest in yoga welled up in youth everywhere. Naturally, with most, it was only thoughtless imitation, and many turned away disillusioned from a training which can offer no instantaneous results. But the important thing was the basic readiness of youth to follow an idol, a leader, anywhere so long as it was away from the commonplace, and the readiness to enter on the spiritual sphere. It is not order as such that is rejected.

What have all these phenomena to say to us?

We live in a time of mighty changes. Future changes due to automation will affect the lives of individuals even more strongly than previous technical developments. If we wish to come through these changes without harm to our physical and psychic natures, to remain healthy and alive as individuals, as peoples, and as the human race, we must meet these changes with our whole integrated being, consisting of spirit, soul and body.

Let us recognize the unrest of youth as an alarm signal, as a warning that all the generations must unite to meet this hour of human destiny. This youth will not understand that we are able to fly to the moon, but not able to banish hunger from the world and to cry halt to murder in Vietnam and in Biafra. Praise God that it does not understand!

In theosophy we profess ideals. But our profession is much too theoretical. The young generation can recognize ideals only if their practical application shows itself in life. Let us check our stock of ideas and free ourselves from dusty traditions, but let us hold to that basic ancient wisdom of humanity that is not subject to the erosion of time. Let us unite across the generations. Let us seek together for the new order, which our world needs, for the new morality, for the new ways to knowledge. Do not let us leave the building of the new world to the experts and computers alone, but let us use together the truly human forces, which are our inheritance, that inner fire which, coming out of the infinite, can so fill our whole being that we are no longer satisfied with mere knowledge. Let us unite heart and mind in an integrated effort so that, with the power of the inspiration, we not only change our own lives, but also do deeds which contribute to the building up of a new collective life in a new world.

PROFESSOR B. R. MULLIK'S TOUR

Several European Sections have already had the pleasure of a lecturing visit from Professor Mullik, and several more will see and hear him before his return to Agra in February. By then he will have been to Wales, Switzerland, Austria, Yugoslavia, France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Finland and England. His lectures range from *Isis Unveiled* through the basic teachings of Theosophy and the brotherhood of man to the rising generation. The European Federation is most grateful to him for spending so much of his valuable time with us, and wishes him a safe return.

REVERBERATIONS

of the Pays Latins Summer School
Birds form groups to find their direction and rising winds that will take them to their destination. F.T.S. gather for a similar purpose when they go to Summer Schools.

A warm Belgium greeted us with light, soft clouds and sunshine. In this atmosphere one was soon able to enter into a rhythm of light and freshness and into a spiritual renewal.

'Many members wait impatiently for the Summer Schools,' said Mr. Sri Ram at the opening. Oh, how many of us, Sadhu, await this haven of understanding, friendship and light, equipped as we are, only with our own wings and often with a heavy heart! Day after day the members try to resuscitate the inner source of their energy. Did they believe it had dried up? It was only encumbered by the suppressions of the previous year: the rancours, the lack of understanding, the disillusion. He knew well, the sage, what we needed. He invited us 'to look without distortion, or colouring of thought or of feeling of self.' Further, 'to free the mind from its ruts, to shed our automatisms.' Finally, to try to act 'according to the truth of things, which is harmony and beauty.'

Having adopted this mental attitude, one's consciousness was engaged in expanding one's perspective. 'Where are we?' shook us by the constructive realism of its truth. It is essential to think, to feel, to be aware of society, of the problems of humanity today and to give them a place in our activities. 'Vitality looks to the future,' said a commentator on Theilhardian thought, and the future is 'the radical tendency of the new christian theology which enables us to glimpse it in the profound change which is being prepared in christian thinking. This asks the central question: Where is God to be found? to which the advanced theologians of the Jesuit Order answer: 'In the depth of one's being.' One can see from this that the partitions which divide us will soon disappear when christians realise this liberating truth.

In this state of mind the mysteries of nature contained in shapes and symbols were well received, whether they were the triangles of Pythagoras or the commentaries of the President on the basic principles of the cosmos. In the midst of these reflections, the lecture on 'Vital Prana' brought its beneficent equilibrium. Nothing was missing from this sketch of the future, as the Aquarian Age and the mystery of tomorrow were evoked, with the perspicacity which this sign gives.

After a grand sweep of the horizon, one's vision returned to the point of departure: Man. 'To see, to understand and to act,' followed by 'The inner adventure.' 'To change man is to change society' and 'to promote a fundamental change in man is the work of the T.S. and of its members.' To be a theosophist is to be conscious of one's share of responsibility in this work. The divine wisdom 'should shape all our relationships, whether they are between parents and children, neighbours and neighbours, or nations and nations.' This was the last note sounded by the President.

Besides the powerful thought that was created in the School, there was another line of activity: the surprise programmes. From the first evening onwards 'The Conquest of Space' launched us into the stratosphere, then into the unlimited immensity of our solar system. The colour films of the moon presaged something of the harmony of the future. The next surprise was the President's talk: 'Truth in Man,' which transported one into the realm of pure beauty. 'Ruysbroek, the great Belgian mystic' was another inspiring lecture.

We spent one day in the artistic centres of Bruges and Ghent and an evening in the company of the ancient enigma of Stonehenge. Towards the end of the week there was a lovely concert, which enabled us to enter into yet a different sphere of harmony. A view of the illuminations of Brussels was the last surprise in store for us, from the magnificent gold of the past in the Grand Place to the symbol of the future: the Atomium.

Each one of us today carries within himself the lights which came with the memory of the participants who enriched our meetings with their presence;

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ENGLISH SECTION SUMMER SCHOOL, 1969

This was held at Nottingham in the Florence Boot Hall of Residence between 25th July and 1st August. Our President, Mr. Sri Ram, and Mrs. Radha Burnier, the Indian Section General Secretary, were present. The President opened and closed the proceedings and gave two lectures, with discussion periods afterwards, and two question and answer periods. His first lecture was on "What is Theosophy?" He touched on the more obvious meanings that can be given to the word, but concentrated most of his talk on the subjective aspects, the faculties and function of the Ego, the Self. His second talk was on "The Nature of Consciousness."

Mr. G. A. Farthing and Miss Ianthe Hoskins took a lecture period and an evening session to explain something of the new courses that the English Section now have available for both private and group work.

Mr. Leslie-Smith gave a fine lecture on "The Theosophist as a Citizen." He drew on history for examples of divergent views of the individual's role in Society, quoting Plato and Aristotle. He emphasised the need for men to realise their responsibility for their affairs.

Mr. Wallace Slater talked on "The Individual in a World of Conflict." He briefly, but in a masterly way, put humanity as a creative hierarchy into the vast evolutionary background of previous chains and their resulting hierarchies as they affected our humanity. He outlined the nature of the conflict confronting humanity as the need to develop not only mind but the higher elements of his nature against persisting involuntary tendencies.

Miss Ianthe Hoskins gave a stimulating lecture on "The Theosophical Attitude to Religion."

Mrs. Joyce Beavis gave a very 'human' talk, indicating much appreciation of, and sympathy with, the personal nature of her fellow humans.

Mrs. Radha Burnier spoke on "Individual and Social Aims," indicating that man's ultimate spiritual goal should transcend all his other interests and priorities, if he were to be really happy and fulfil himself.

Lady Welby gave a very interesting outline of "Current Views on Personality." She had read very widely and quoted liberally from the works of psychologists, scientists and other informed writers.

The last lecture was given by Mr. E. J. Burton on "Unity and Education." After briefly reviewing the present position, he indicated the directions in which, in his view, the educational processes should move, particularly in the pupil-teacher relationship. He felt that in our present youth there was much special talent that needed special sympathy to draw it out and develop it to the full.

The last formal sessions were an open forum on the school theme.

There were two experimental sessions. One was a "Words and Music" devotional period, taken by Mrs. Leslie-Smith, and the other a short period of readings from Mr. Sri Ram's written works. It was felt that members generally do not appreciate the quality of these, and the session was intended to bring them to notice.

Visits were arranged to Belton Hall, Grantham, the Nottingham Council House, the theatre and to the local lodge, which held an "At Home," much appreciated by everyone.

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our well-loved President; Mrs. C. Wyss, the new and charming chairman, and Mr. van Dissel, the chairman during the difficult years of the war and its aftermath. We also remembered Mr. John Coats, who is continuing the work elsewhere. Finally, we thank the Belgium Section, its members and its general secretary most warmly for the welcome, the friendship, the comfort, the sunshine and the flowers which enveloped us. These are things one never forgets.

REPORT ON THE 1969 PICHL SUMMER SCHOOL

(By a 'young member' who attended the School for the first time)

As I look back, I must confess that it was wise of my Basle friends to encourage me to attend the summer school in Pichl for the first time. "It would be an experiment," I reflected (since it is not so very long since I found my way to the T.S.). So I booked to attend the school and left with two members from Basle on the journey to that beautiful isolated spot. The journey itself was an experience, and one would have to be a poet to do justice to our stay in Pichl—to find the right words to do so.

That atmosphere of pure thoughts, that all-embracing, deep, inner joy which enables one to be ready to help those weaker than oneself (including animals) must have been experienced to be known. In that force field of love, which certainly embraced everyone, penetrated them and expressed itself in visible and tangible kindness, the days passed too quickly.

It is true that at first I was very worried. I must confess I had many doubts, and I even toyed with the thought of leaving the T.S. and carrying on on my own, because I felt so forlorn, as an 'intruder,' during the first 24 hours in Pichl. Then there came the first meditation in a group and I knew—I knew again—that here was the bond between us—the search for truth—and that brought me a sigh of relief and a sense of light. The lectures we heard every morning after meditation were, without exception, very interesting, well founded and well prepared, and, in some cases, except when the lecturer spoke without a text, we shall receive the texts, for which not only I but all the others who were present are very grateful. But not only the lectures were of a high standard. I should like to mention, with gratitude, the musical 'framework.' We had the privilege of absorbing a 'musical experience' also before and after the morning meditation. I should also like to mention those who prepared and spoke texts for the meditation and to thank them, for I think that a great deal of work and thought went into this task. Perhaps it was the first time that a small group practised yoga in the early morning in Pichl—this should also be mentioned and the young trained teacher thanked. Perhaps it was also the first time that in the evenings four study groups studied enthusiastically the subject of the lecture held in the morning. This prompted our group to very intensive thought, and I enjoyed taking an active part. But all that would not have been possible if we had not had an excellent organiser among us—and the organisers should further be thanked for giving us wonderful free afternoons, for our personal use! This gave us an opportunity to form and to deepen valuable friendships.

My first 'experiment' could not have been more successful. Many thanks.

GERTRUD SCHAAD

NEW "QUEST BOOKS"

THE LIGHT OF ASIA. Sir Edwin Arnold. T.P.H. London. 11s.

This beautiful poem—a classic first published in 1879—deals with the search, enlightenment and teaching of the Buddha. Not only is it deeply philosophical in nature, but because of its poetic form and its narrative of the dramatic incidents in Siddhartha's life, it is delightful and absorbing reading.

THE COSMIC WOMB. Arthur W. Osborn. T.P.H. London.

Anyone troubled about the mystery of existence and whether God is reality or fiction will find stimulating food for thought in this book which contains a great variety of interesting and challenging ideas on metaphysical questions affecting us all.

THE HIDDEN WISDOM IN THE HOLY BIBLE. Vol. II. Geoffrey Hodson. T.P.H. London. 24s.

Volume II, in which the author deals with the hidden wisdom in the Book of Genesis, is now also available in the "Quest Book" Series.

SUMMER SCHOOLS IN 1970

4th-10th July: Netherlands Section.

11th-18th July: German Section (Hustedt).

End of July/beginning of August: Scandinavian Region (Gammel Praestegaard).

1st-9th August: Scandinavian Region (Gammel Praestegaard). Guest speakers: Mr. and Mrs. J. Perkins. Charges: 45.00 Danish crowns per day (sharing with two or three others), 33.00 Danish crowns per day (camping). Charges include breakfast, lunch and dinner. Please send booking fee of 10.00 Danish crowns (non returnable) to Mrs. E. Sverrild, Dalgas Boulevard 27, 2000 Copenhagen, Denmark.

8th-15th August: British Region, St. Andrew's, Scotland: Meetings of the Council of The Theosophical Society in Europe; St. Andrew's is a very beautiful old university town by the sea; prices for the school (including full board): Fr.150.—approximately; key-note: "From the Ancient Wisdom to Modern Theosophy".

Early September: German-speaking Region (Pichl, Austria).

A "Pays Latins" summer school will be held in France, but the place and date are not yet known.

You can book already for these summer schools!

In 1971 a European Congress (one is held every three years) will take place in Terriet in September.

The National Committee will meet again on 18th January, 1970, in Basle to discuss proposals for the amendment of our Statutes.

GERMAN-SPEAKING REGIONAL COMMITTEE

A very useful meeting was held in Munich on 8th-9th November under the chairmanship of Mrs. C. Wyss. Plans were discussed for the Regional Summer School, to be held in Pichl, Austria, in September, 1970; for book publications in 1970; and in connection with the magazine "Adyar."

The Summer School will have no special key-note, each lecturer himself fixing his subject. There will be small study groups (10 to 12 persons), and the subjects to be treated will be announced in advance.

In 1970 the Adyar-Verlag, Graz, will publish German translations of the following books: *Trust yourself to Life* (C. Codd), *Raja Yoga* (W. Slater) and *The Mirror of Life and Death* (Dr. L. Bendit).

BOOK REVIEW

THE ETHERIC DOUBLE. Arthur E. Powell. T.P.H. London. 15s.

The latest reprint of this well-known book has a Foreword by members of the Science Group of the Theosophical Research Centre, London. This points out that there is still no scientific evidence for most of the observations recorded in the book. This is indeed surprising, since the Kilner screens alone could well be submitted to exhaustive tests, and the remarkable results of healing by methods other than medical seriously examined, since they are carried on all over the world, and in the west notably in some christian churches.

Obviously this scientific work is still to come, and in the meantime students will find much of interest on a variety of aspects of the use of the etheric, such as telepathy, healing, magnetism and the whole subject of vitality.

G. EEDLE

FROM PIONEER TO POET or The Twelve Great Gates. An expansion of the Signs of the Zodiac Analysed, by Isabelle M. Pagan. T.P.H. London. 45s.

This well-known book, first published in 1911, is now available again in a reset and improved format. Whilst giving a very perceptive description of the twelve astrological types, it has a number of references to the social and legal conditions of the first decade of this century, many of which have changed. These, however, do not affect the usefulness of the comments on the types described.